A NUMBER of Herefordshire teachers came out on strike on January 31 owing to the refusal of the local education authority to establish a scale of salaries, whereby if a teacher's record is satisfactory his pay shall increase automatically until a maximum is reached. We learn from the London *Times* that the strikers include the head teachers of about 80 out of some 176 schools. In addition, there are schools where assistants and not the headmasters or mistresses are ceasing work. More resignations will fall due as the weeks pass, until at the end of March 117 head teachers out of 189 employed will be idle, and, including assistants, a total of 223. Before the teachers' threat to strike the average salary of headmasters was £111, against an average for all the British counties of £146 6s., and the average salary of head mistresses was £88 16s., against £100 8s. for the English counties. There were similar disproportions in the salaries of class teachers. The local education authority, admitting that the salaries paid in Herefordshire were low, increased the salaries of certain teachers in December last by amounts totalling £1,300 a year.

DR. ETHELBERT D. WARFIELD has resigned the presidency of Lafayette College.

DR. GEORGE E. BREWER has been appointed to the chair of surgery at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University. Dr. Walter B. James has asked to be relieved from membership in the medical faculty. He will retain his professorship and continue to direct research students from time to time.

J. F. MCCLENDON, of Cornell Medical College, New York City, has accepted a position in the department of physiology, University of Minnesota Medical School.

DR. WATSON MARSHALL has been appointed demonstrator in laryngology in the School of Medicine of the University of Pittsburgh.

DR. MARIENNE PLEHN, assistant in the biological laboratory at Munich, has been made professor. She is said to be the fifth woman to receive this title in German universities.

DR. AUGUST BRAUER, director of the zoological museum of the University of Berlin, has been called to a professorship at Bonn, but it is expected that he will remain at Berlin.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

THE CYTOLOGICAL TIME OF MUTATION IN TOBACCO

IN the issue of SCIENCE for January 2, 1914, there is described a mutation that occurred in a variety of the common tobacco which gives promise to become of great economic value. In the article referred to it was assumed that the germinal change must have occurred after fertilization because the aberrant plant bred true. Professor Castle has asked if parthenogenesis may not be as reasonable an interpretation of the phenomenon since parthenogenesis is known to occur in *Nicotiana tabacum*.

The possibility had naturally occurred to us. And since it is impossible to prove a negative the same alternative may be presented in discussing any Angiosperm variation. Mrs. Rose Haig Thomas has reported parthenogenesis in *Nicotiana* and her work has been confirmed by Bateson on *one* variety.

One may not deny their conclusions, but the theorem of logic used above holds here as well. While admitting the possibility that Mrs. Thomas has found strains of parthenogenetic *Nicotiana*, it is possible that her results were incorrectly interpreted. We have made numerous attempts to secure parthenogenetic seeds from various species of *Nicotiana* without success. Dr. E. M. East and Mr. R. Wellington made nearly one thousand such attempts with over 50 species and varieties of the genus, also without success. We think it reasonable to assume, therefore, that parthenogenesis in *our* strain of *Nicotiana* is extremely improbable.

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WINTER COLORATION OF WEASELS

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: It is well known that throughout Canada, and in the northern parts of the United States, the weasels become white in winter, whereas in the southern, warmer parts of the country they do not do

so, but remain brown. I am anxious to trace the southern boundary of the region in which these animals make this change—become white. I should be grateful, therefore, if any naturalist, trapper, or other reader of this journal, who believes he lives near this sought-for southern boundary, would send me word upon a post-card, or by letter, whether the weasels in his locality turn completely white, or only partly so, or whether some turn and others do not; and also whether the change appears to him to depend upon the coming of snow—that is does its time vary with the comparative earliness or lateness of a season?

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SCIENTIFIC MEN AND PHONETIC SPELLING

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: Professor J. C. Arthur, of Purdue University, says in SCIENCE for October 10, 1913, p. 513:

> He is a brave man who openly throws stones at another man's domicile, even if he justify the act as altruistic, knowing the proverbial danger incurred.

Professor Arthur thereupon bravely throws stones at Dr. Dabney, and now I wish to throw a few friendly stones at Professor Arthur, at Dr. Dabney and at most of the other eminent contributors to SCIENCE. True,

> It is not the proper plan
> For any scientific gent to whale his fellow man.

But throwing stones is not "whaling," and all scientific gents will agree that a mere philologist can not be himself a scientific gent according to the statute in that case made and provided.

Professor Arthur chides Dr. Dabney for using the phrase "fungus growth," though he would excuse the phrase if it were intended for "fungous growth," "with the *o* accidentally omitted." But suppose Dr. Dabney, like some other scientific men, for example Dr. Wilder, should spell the adjective *fungous* with the *o* intentionally omitted? Would that be a violation of "good English" or of "good grammar"? Many scientific men would say so. Other scientific men would not say so.

The point that I make is that many contributors to SCIENCE, in criticizing matters of language and grammar, ignore a much more important matter in the relation of science to language. Even the gentlemen who write long and interesting articles about nomenclature, and insist with vehemence on the retention of this or that name or spelling or misprint, because it happened so (surely a free and easy attitude in science), do not touch upon the vital point. Most of them, by their example, or by abstaining from utterance or action, are preventing the scientific discussion, and the scientific settlement, of important matters of language relating to science. That is, they will not consider or discuss, or help others to consider or discuss, in print, the scientific notation of the English language, or of other languages. By their conservatism, obscurantism, ignorance, indifference, apathy, hostility, fury, cynicism, geniality, orthodoxy, call it what you will (and it is some or all of these), they prevent the editors and readers of the journals of science from dealing with this important matter of science.

They may write to their journals about the pronunciation of this or that word, sometimes about the etymology of this or that word, but, usually what they write, or at least what is printed, is superficial, insufficient or inexact; in a word, unscientific.

The reason is, I suppose, that most of the orthodox men of science do not know anything, accurately, about the pronunciation of English words, or about the sounds of English, or about the sounds of any language. They do not know, and will not try to find out, what symbols they should or might use in order to indicate with accuracy the sounds they wish to indicate or to discuss. And even those who do know these things, and can use, with a pen, an adequate notation of sounds, can not present that notation in the pages of a scientific journal, unless by a special arrangement with a more or less reluctant editor or group of editors, or at an expense which the writer himself must meet. In short, the orthodox scientific men of the United States and of Great Britain are, in this